**Grammar Mini-Lesson: Adjectives vs. Adverbs**

**Definition:** (For the purposes of this exercise) an adjective is a descriptive word used to describe a noun; an adverb is a descriptive word is used to describe a verb.

**Grade Level Targeted:** Grade 9-12 (as needed)

* This is a lesson that I “keep in my back pocket,” so to speak, for use with a class that has demonstrated some difficulty with this rule (perhaps you have noticed recurring usage errors in a recent assignment, for example).
* I have taught this particular grammar rule in ENG4E and ESLC.

**Common Errors:**

* Perhaps the most common usage problems with adjectives and adverbs occur with adverbs that do not have the easily identifiable “**ly**” suffix, the most common example being “well.” 🡺 **Example:** “I read good.”
* Sometimes students will have been corrected for the previous example, but without the reasoning behind the correction being explained, and this will lead to further errors.

🡺 **Example:** “I am well at reading.”

* Students will also often have difficulty when using multiple descriptors in a sentence: they will frequently incorrectly combine an adjective and an adverb.

🡺 **Example:** “He moved quickly and quiet.” **or** “Erik talked real slowly.”

**Activity (See also the Power Point Presentation posted on the Wiki):**

* Begin by commenting to the class (perhaps on a recent assignment); tell them they are “doing real good” or how their essays were so good that you could “mark them real quick.”
* Continue intentionally misusing adjectives and adverbs until either a student corrects you, or the students begin to laugh. Depending on which occurs first, either:
* Ask the student who is correcting you what you did wrong, or
* Ask for a volunteer to explain why what you are saying is funny.
* The student will usually be able to explain that what you are saying “isn’t right,” but will have a hard time explaining why. Use this as an entry to define “adjectives” and “adverbs” (Either write these terms on the board or show the Power Point, depending on resources.)
* Go through some examples of usage in sentences, modelling the behaviour that will be required to complete the exercise sheet (first identifying which word is being described and what type of word it is, and then choosing the correct descriptor). Since adjective and adverb usage is often intuitive for students, it is important to have students go through the steps, so that they understand **why** they are using each part of speech in each case.
* Once the students seem to “get it,” distribute the exercise sheet. (Students will likely need no more than ten minutes to complete it). Circulate and aid students who are having difficulty.